



**Ready, Set...Launch - the Building Better Communities Bond Program gets underway**



***"Now, it's up to government to spend the money wisely and efficiently," Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Alvarez told a gathering of community leaders who joined County officials in kicking off the Building Better Communities Bond Program. The bond program, which will fund community improvements throughout Miami-Dade, is one of the largest of its kind in the U.S.***

**Miami-Dade County** launched the *Building Better Communities* Bond Program with a kick-off event at **Virginia Key Beach Park**, the site of a new museum to be funded through the bond program. The project is part of an initial series of community improvements made possible by the \$2.9 billion bond program approved by voters last fall.

**Mayor Carlos Alvarez** and members of the **Board of County Commissioners** joined with **Virginia Key Beach Park Trustees** last month to kick off the bond program that will fund more than 300 community improvements over the next 15-20 years.

"The County is launching one of the most ambitious capital construction programs in its history," said **County Manager George M. Burgess**. "Over the next several months, work will begin on improvement projects that will touch every neighborhood in Miami-Dade."

Virginia Key, the only beachfront recreational area open to the County's African American community in the 1940's and 50's, is a national historic landmark. Closed since 1982, the park is now being restored through a series of improvements funded in part by the bond program. A new museum will include exhibits dedicated to African-American and Caribbean history.

Other bond projects include:

1. Parks, Recreation and Green Space. More than 60 park and recreation improvements, beach renourishment, renovations to the Orange Bowl and the protection of agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands.
2. Culture and Education. Improvements to six branch libraries and historic sites - including Virginia Key Beach Park, Vizcaya and the Lyric Theater - renovations to

Headstart facilities and construction of a new Cuban Museum.

3. Community and Neighborhood. Renovations to neighborhood service centers, municipal buildings, new bike paths/sidewalks and affordable housing.
4. Public Safety. Upgraded courts, corrections, fire-rescue, police, medical examiner and animal services facilities.
5. Infrastructure. Expanded water, sewer, drainage systems, bridge repairs and upgrades to government buildings.
6. Healthcare. Improvements to Jackson Memorial Hospital facilities.
7. Business Development. Economic development funds to support local business growth, expansion of Miami Beach Convention Center and construction of the Martin Luther King Business Center.

Visit [www.miamidade.gov/build](http://www.miamidade.gov/build) for more information.

## Miami-Dade Now

A look inside your Miami-Dade County.  
**Summer 2005**

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**Carlos Alvarez**  
Mayor

## Mayor's Message

As I approach my 30th anniversary of public service, I am constantly humbled by your generosity and delighted by your interest in county government. I have received hundreds of letters from you, our residents, regarding my proposed reforms for county government to improve our current voting and transportation systems, among other topics. The one common theme among all of the letters is how deeply you care about the services Miami-Dade County provides. We truly are a part of your lives 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

I have enjoyed going out into the community to meet you and discuss the issues that are important to you. I will continue to visit you and listen to your thoughts and ideas. It gives me the opportunity to talk with you about my policy initiatives, including elder wellness, mental health and the environment. As my policies develop, I will keep you updated on all of the programs and services we will be offering.

I'm happy to announce that the Office of the Mayor recently launched a new website, [www.miamidade.gov/mayor](http://www.miamidade.gov/mayor). With just a click of the mouse, you can find information about my initiatives, request appointments and appearances, read press releases and view my public appearance calendar and photo gallery.

Making our government more customer-friendly and efficient is one of my administration's priorities. In today's technology-savvy society, creating a website which is easy to navigate, and provides up-to-the-moment information about the Office of the Mayor and the County's services is essential. I encourage all of you to visit the new site to familiarize yourselves with all we have to offer.

As the summer progresses, I want to remind all of you to prepare for this year's hurricane season. As you may know, Hurricane season began on June 1st. Early preparation and shopping for hurricane supplies are your best defense.

Thank you for your continued support and feedback. Together, we can make Miami-Dade County a better place, a place where all of us are proud to call our home.

## From the County Manager

2004 will be a year I am sure many of us will remember for a long time. It was a year that brought back painful memories of Hurricane Andrew for many Miami-Dade residents, even though it was our neighbors to the north who faced the brunt of a record four hurricanes in the same season.

Although many of us were here for Andrew, there are those among us who have never lived through a hurricane. And even for those of us who survived Andrew, time has a funny way of making us complacent. But hopefully, last year reminded us that we need to be prudent about preparing for hurricanes.

Hurricane season is now here and I hope last year's busy season serves to remind all of us of the importance of being prepared. I am sure many of you were stuck in long lines at the grocery store and the hardware store, and I am also sure it was not very pleasant. It certainly is not pleasant to get to a store with a hurricane bearing down on Florida, only to find that they are out of bottled water, or batteries, or plywood for your windows.

And that is why I urge you to prepare your home and your family **now**. This is the perfect time to get your bottled water, canned food, batteries, first aid kit and other important supplies. If you have shutters, make sure they work properly and make sure you and every adult in your family knows how to install them. The same for plywood, if that is what you have for your windows.

Make a family plan now. Will you or another family member be expected to work in the event of a hurricane? If so, you will have to make special arrangements—perhaps with a neighbor or other family member—to ensure your family and home are protected.

Do you live in an evacuation zone? If you are not sure, find out now. If you are, make sure your entire family knows what to do and which public shelter to go to if an evacuation is ordered for your zone.

Do you have pets? Make arrangements for them now, especially if you know you will need to go to a public shelter, as public shelters do not allow pets. To register for a pet friendly hurricane evacuation center, call **(786) 331-5354**.

If you or someone in your family is on medications, make arrangements now with your doctor or pharmacist to ensure you have enough to last in the event of a hurricane and its aftermath.

The **County's Office of Emergency Management** has a fantastic website with a wealth of information on hurricane preparedness, including a map of evacuation zones. You can access it at [www.miamidade.gov/oem/](http://www.miamidade.gov/oem/) or you can contact the **Answer Center** at **(305) 468-5900**.

Either way, do not wait for the last minute to get ready for a hurricane. It might just be too late for you and your family.



**George M. Burgess**  
County Manager



## Your County Commission in action!



### Commissioners urge residents to prepare for Hurricane season

Miami-Dade County Commission Chairman Joe A. Martinez joined Commissioners Natacha Seijas, Carlos A. Gimenez, Dennis D. Moss (not pictured) and Bruno A. Barreiro in teaming up with the Office of Emergency Management, Miami-Dade Police, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, the American Red Cross and Home Depot to educate residents on how to get ready for hurricane season.

## County's Bonds Get High Marks



Miami-Dade County government recently got the thumbs up from the investment and financial community.

The vote of confidence came when Fitch Ratings - a major bond ratings service - assigned an "A" rating to \$186 million worth of the **County's Subordinate Special Obligation Bonds** (issued in June) and \$346 million worth of outstanding County subordinate special obligation and refunding bonds.

Additionally, Fitch raised the \$41 million of Special Obligation Courthouse Center Project 1998 Bonds from "A" to "A+," and upgraded both the \$226 million of outstanding General Obligation County Bonds and \$121 million of Public Service Tax Bonds from "A+" to "AA-." The "AA" rating, which is slightly higher than the "A" rating, indicates a bond issuer has a very high credit quality and a very low expectation of credit risk.

What does this mean? The County's higher rating means investors feel Miami-Dade County is well run. "Our economic growth and tax base played a part in their evaluation, but good management, and capable governance, were also important factors," explains **Rachel Baum, Director of Finance**. "This is a sign that the investment community has confidence in County leadership and their ability to make sound decisions on behalf of residents."

Fitch Ratings is a leading global rating agency committed to providing the world's credit markets with accurate, timely and prospective credit opinions. Miami-Dade County is the largest metropolitan area in the State of Florida and the eighth-largest county in the United States, with a population of 2.4 million people who come from more than 100 different countries.

## Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond Program a huge success

Vicky Sanchez watches as her young daughters Kristen and Kristina splash and frolic in the pool. They, along with more than a dozen children, are playing in the surf of the wave pool at **Hialeah's McDonald Water Park**. In a few minutes the girls, 6 and 8, will be off - with inner tubes and mom in tow - to the lazy river for a slow coast around the park. **Hialeah's McDonald Water Park at 7505 NW 12th Avenue** is exactly where this family wants to be on a muggy sunny day, and it's just one of the projects funded by **Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond Program** that has beautified and improved our community.

Eight years ago, Miami-Dade County voters approved the **Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond Program (SNP)**. The **SNP** has helped to restore and improve neighborhood and regional parks throughout the County and has been instrumental in improving the overall quality of life for many residents and visitors of all ages. At the same time, a **Citizens Oversight Committee** was created and tasked with overseeing the administration of the bond program. Since 1996, the **Committee** has approved \$200 million in bond proceeds and more than \$11 million in interest earnings to fund



*The South Miami Community Center in Murray Park was partially funded using \$1.7 million in SNP funds.*

approximately 500 park improvement projects and acquisitions. To date, a remarkable 372 projects have been completed. Among them are **South Miami's Murray Park and Recreation Center** and **Miami-Dade's Ronald Reagan Equestrian Center**-a full-service equestrian facility and state-of-the-art show arena. Here registered Arabians, hunter/jumpers, Western style, Paso Finos, and other breeds come to strut their stuff and pick up valuable show ribbons and trophies at more than 36 equestrian shows a year.

Currently, there are 98 funded projects in progress and an additional 68 recently funded new and continuing projects, including the **MetroZoo Tropical Americas Exhibit**, **Virginia Key Beach Park**, **Southridge Park Aquatic Center**, **Miami River Walk** improve-

ments and more. There are also many **SNP** funded park upgrades in neighborhoods near you including playgrounds, swimming pools and splash grounds, outdoor courts, recreational centers and athletic fields. It's all a part of the way Miami-Dade County is keeping its promise to deliver excellence.

For more information, visit [www.miamidade.gov/SNPTrust/home.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/SNPTrust/home.asp)



## Chairman Joe A. Martinez, District 11



Recently, the Dolphin Mall was the site of the Dial-A-Life program's first cellular phone donation marathon. Many Miami-Dade County residents donated their used, disconnected digital cell phones so eligible, at-risk County residents—the elderly, the disabled, low-income residents and domestic violence victims—can use them to call 9-1-1 in case of an emergency. The event

kicked-off a countywide campaign to help spread awareness about the program, which was created in 2001 and sponsored by **County Commission Chairman Joe A. Martinez**.

"This is a simple way for people to help," **Chairman Martinez** said. "How many of us discard our old cellular phones in a drawer when we get a new one? Now is the time to donate those old phones ... phones which can be used to help save a life."

To date, the program has collected 3,247 cellular phones and distributed 1,428 refurbished phones to residents in need. However, the need for donated cellular phones is on-going. **Chairman Martinez** is asking residents to continue to contribute their used phones to the Dial-A-Life program.

There are currently 40 collection centers in Miami-Dade County, including one in the lobby of the **Stephen P. Clark Government Center**. The newest collection centers are: **Ayuda Inc., 7118 Byron Avenue in Miami Beach; Women in Transition of South Florida, 85 NW 23 Street, 2nd floor and the Miami-Dade Building Department, 11805 SW 26th Street, Room 208.**

To contact **Chairman Martinez**, please call (305) 375-5511 or email [District11@miamidade.gov](mailto:District11@miamidade.gov) To donate your digital cellular phone, or to obtain a Dial-A-Life cellular phone, call (305) 375-DIAL or visit [miamidade.gov/dialalife](http://miamidade.gov/dialalife)

## Vice-Chairman Dennis C. Moss, District 9



In response to recent discussions regarding moving the Urban Development Boundary Line (UDB), **Vice-Chairman Dennis C. Moss** called for a study on the potential impact to the community. "I do not support moving the line at this time," said **Vice-Chairman Moss**. "I believe it is very important that we wait for the results of the study so we can make an informed decision."

The Urban Development Boundary line was designated in the 1970's and essentially runs north-south to buffer farmlands and the Everglades from the onrushing urban sprawl. West of the UDB, building is restricted to one dwelling per five acres. The line has not been moved since 1992.

**Vice-Chairman Moss** sponsored legislation to study the line because of the incredible development occurring in Miami-Dade County, the same development he believes is driving housing prices to exaggerated levels. "We need to have all the information available to either support a movement or a holding of the line," said Moss. "Without it, the decision to move the UDB becomes purely political, rather than based upon the current facts."

**Vice-Chairman Moss** also sponsored a study to look at the effects of the current growth on gentrification and affordable housing. "Most new housing units in the County start with a \$250 to \$300 thousand price tag, out of the range of a majority of working families," said **Moss**. "Because of the explosive growth in areas in the southern and western parts of the County, housing prices have doubled and tripled over the last 2-3 years."

**Vice-Chairman Moss** may be reached at (305) 375-4832 or via email at [District9@miamidade.gov](mailto:District9@miamidade.gov)

## Barbara J. Jordan, District 1



In February, **Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan** presented King's Kids Christian Academy with the Mom and Pop Business of the Year Award. **Located in District 1**, King's Kids Christian Academy received the award for demonstrating the most advancement and improvement in the past year as well as \$5,000 from the District's Discretionary Fund.

**Commissioner Jordan** also presented the "District 1 Outstanding Business Award" to Country Corner Produce for the owner's ability to give back to the community by providing employment opportunities to District residents.

"I'm pleased to see that businesses in District 1 are utilizing the Mom and Pop Grant program," said **Commissioner Jordan**. "The Neighbors and Neighbors organization has helped hundreds of small business establishments, and this is a perfect example of how County programs can help local businesses grow and thrive."

In March, a coalition of elected officials met on issues that impact citizens in their respective districts. As the brainchild of **Commissioner Jordan**, the coalition, which consisted of **State Senator Frederica Wilson, State Representative Wilbert "Tee" Holloway, State Representative Yolly Roberson, Miami-Dade School Board Member Robert Ingram and City of Opa-Locka Mayor Joseph L. Kelley**, discussed issues such as HIV/AIDS, the loss of health clinics in public schools, state budget cuts in affordable housing programs, the North Metrorail Transit Corridor, the FCAT, South Florida Workforce issues, and Opa-Locka Law Enforcement.

**Commissioner Jordan** may be reached at (305) 375-5694.

## Dorrian D. Rolle, District 2



Improving the quality of life for constituents in his district has played a very important role in recent months for **Commissioner Dorrian D. Rolle**. One such improvement came with the grand opening of the **Uleta Fire Rescue Station**. In addition to having around-the-clock staffing of firefighters/paramedics who operate from an Advanced Life Support (ALS) fire engine, the station also features an ALS transport rescue vehicle.

Another dream of **Commissioner Rolle's** became a reality upon the opening of a new recreation center at **Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Memorial Park**. The 5,640-square-foot recreation center features many amenities, including a computer room with Internet access, a meeting room, a park manager's office and restrooms. After-school and adult programs will be available in the near future. **MLK Park**, located at **6000 NW 32 Court**, currently has tennis, racquetball and basketball courts, as well as open field space.

Up to 600 jobs may be created in the **Poinciana Industrial Center** in Liberty City thanks to a landmark lease extended to Poinciana Partners, LLP. They intend to build a mixed-use, bio-pharmaceutical complex that will include commercial, industrial and retail buildings in the heart of Liberty City. "I have worked long and hard to bring private sector money to Liberty City to create jobs," said **Commissioner Rolle**. The project is expected to lure pharmaceutical companies involved in manufacturing, distribution and research.

Please contact **Commissioner Rolle** at (305) 375-4833 or via email at [District2@miamidade.gov](mailto:District2@miamidade.gov)

## Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler, District 3



In April, nearly 800 residents crowded the Joseph Caleb Center to hear **Commissioner Dr. Barbara Carey-Shuler** deliver her fourth annual State of District Three address. The six initiatives **Carey-Shuler** outlined include increasing affordable housing stock; supporting and promoting economic development and community revitalization; protecting and providing support to Jackson Memorial Hospital; working to achieve the People's Transportation Plan; protecting the existing charter that governs Miami-Dade County; and utilizing the Children's Bill of Rights document to plan for our children.

"I am still working to open doors because I love this community and those who work along with me to help challenge the system, other leaders, and our allies to make fundamental changes so that we can all be safer, healthier and prosperous," said **Carey-Shuler**.

**Commissioner Carey-Shuler** and **U.S. Congresswoman Carrie Meek** (ret.) joined **Miami-Dade Housing Agency Director Alphonso K. Brewster** and representatives from the **U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Bank of America, MDHA Development Corporation**, and a host community and housing partners to dedicate the **Ward Tower Assisted Living Facility (ALF)**, located at **54th Street and 22nd Avenue**. The Ward Tower ALF is the first publicly funded assisted living facility constructed in the nation and is intended for low-income elderly residents. It will provide housing to 100 elderly residents who will receive supportive services.

Contact **Commissioner Carey-Shuler** at (305) 375-5393 or via email at [District3@miamidade.gov](mailto:District3@miamidade.gov)

## Sally Heyman, District 4



**Commissioner Heyman** met with each city in District 4 to prioritize and schedule funding for bond projects - a collaborate effort between elected officials and activists. All 13 cities in District 4 will be scheduled in the first bond series, beginning summer 2005.

Continuing to work on pedestrian and motorist safety, additional lights and traffic signal projects have been approved and installed in the district. Recently approved signal replacements in the City of Aventura: NE 34th Avenue and NE 207th Street and NE 34th Avenue and North Country Club Drive. These traffic signal replacements will provide Aventura motorists additional turn signals.

**Commissioner Heyman** recently presented a \$15,000 check to our **Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department** to purchase safety and electronic equipment for a newly acquired fire rescue boat. The boat, which will be docked in Northeast Dade, will provide additional protection to waterfront properties, the shoreline and persons and vessels on our waterways. The check was presented to the firefighters who will operate the new boat during the graduation ceremonies for the Boat Operation and Rescue Training course, conducted by the **Miami-Dade Police Department's Marine Patrol**.

Please contact **Commissioner Heyman** at (305) 375- 5128 or via email at [District4@miamidade.gov](mailto:District4@miamidade.gov)

## Bruno Barreiro, District 5



Look for **Commissioner Bruno Barreiro** at a County department near you! To better understand how County services are delivered, **Commissioner Barreiro** has embarked on a new mission - to work as a new employee for the day. Once a month he will work a full day

# Your County Commission at work

with a different department. Most recently, he installed signs with **Public Works**. Prior to that, he reported to his new supervisor, **Mr. Kenneth Edwards** at the **Solid Waste Department**. Wearing a uniform, work boots and gloves, **Commissioner Barreiro** spent an eight-hour day picking up bulk waste throughout Miami-Dade County.

"My goal is to bring County government closer to the community and I'm hopeful that this experience will establish new relationships for the government with both the residents of Miami-Dade County and its employees," said **Commissioner Barreiro**. "This has been a wonderful opportunity for me to work with both the **Public Works** and **Solid Waste Departments**, and I look forward to working with other departments as well. Most importantly, I now have a great appreciation of what our County employees endure while out in the field working to deliver excellence every day."

For more information, please contact **Commissioner Barreiro** at (305) 643-8525 or via email at [District5@miamidade.gov](mailto:District5@miamidade.gov)

## Rebeca Sosa, District 6



**Commissioner Rebeca Sosa** continues to work diligently to reform County procurement and assist departments in being more efficient.

One measure directs the County Manager to study the establishment of a pool of retired judges, business persons and lay persons to volunteer to observe proceedings of Miami-

Dade County selection committees and make recommendations. Selection committees evaluate offers, proposals and quotes submitted by individuals and firms seeking contracts. A second measure directs the County Manager to develop procedures to assure that County departments monitor contracts within their jurisdiction and purview with the appropriate inspection and compliance personnel. The procedures provide that a specific person be assigned to administer each contract and be responsible to assure that the contract is performed in accordance with the terms of the contract price. The third measure directs the County Manager to develop a procedure for placing a County department on management watch due to administrative deficiencies. It will also provide the steps required for a department to be removed from management watch.

"By putting these measures in place, County departments will be able to become more competitive, in addition to being held accountable for not performing as expected, just like in any other business," said **Commissioner Sosa**.

To contact **Commissioner Sosa**, please call (305) 375-5696 or email her at [District6@miamidade.gov](mailto:District6@miamidade.gov)

## Carlos A. Gimenez, District 7



**Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez** and **City of Miami** officials kicked off the **Virginia Key Master Plan for Virginia Key Beach Park**. The proposed Master Plan is designed to help renovate and restore the historic site, which has been closed since 1982. Most recently, the carousel building, dance floor, picnic pavilion, bathhouses and concession stands have been restored and updated. Other projects underway include renourishing the shoreline, updating water and sewer lines and repaving parking lots.

**Commissioner Gimenez** presented the cast of the Havana Night Club show a key to the County at a recent performance held at the University of Miami Convocation Center. The troupe is the largest number of Cuban artists to defect during Fidel Castro's regime.

**Commissioner Gimenez** appointed **Genaro "Chip" Iglesias** as his **Chief of Staff**. Iglesias, who has almost 24 years of public service experience, also served as Chief of Staff to then-City Manager Carlos

A. Gimenez from 2000 to 2003. "Chip has always been a great asset to me and he brings a wealth of government experience to this position," said **Commissioner Gimenez**. "Our established professional relationship will allow for a seamless transition as we work to advance the issues of District 7 and all of Miami-Dade County."

**Commissioner Gimenez** may be reached at (305) 375-5680 or via email at [District7@miamidade.gov](mailto:District7@miamidade.gov)

## Katy Sorenson, District 8



**Commissioner Katy Sorenson** joined thousands of volunteers on April 16th at **Biscayne National Park** for the **County's Bayanza Biscayne Bay Cleanup Day**. **Commissioner Sorenson**, who regularly pitches in to clean up Biscayne Bay at one of the designated sites in South Dade, took a moment to thank all the volunteers for donating their time and energy to

protect the Bay from the effects of our urban environment.

"Our national parks are the pride of the County and are treasures we need to protect," she explains. "Miami-Dade is fortunate to have Biscayne National Park and its ecological marvels and I want to do my part to help keep it clean."

In March, **Commissioner Sorenson** and the **Office of Countywide Healthcare Planning (OCHP)** kicked off the **Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE)** program. The award-winning program was designed to provide health insurance and prescription assistance information and referral services to seniors at no cost. Since its inception in 1993, SHINE volunteers have assisted more than 350,000 people.

"There are many senior residents in our community who are living on a fixed income, and we need to make sure they know about existing guidance and referral programs. Sometimes it's just a matter of connecting the two," said **Commissioner Sorenson**.

**Commissioner Sorenson** may be reached at (305) 375-5212 or via email at [District8@miamidade.gov](mailto:District8@miamidade.gov)

## Javier D. Souto, District 10



**Commissioner Javier D. Souto**, along with the **Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Department**, celebrated the installation of emergency call boxes at Tropical Park, located at 7900 SW 40th Street. The park is the first of the County's regional parks equipped with outdoor phones for the public to use to call 9-1-1 in an emergency. **Commissioner Souto** secured \$350,000 in funding from the County's 2002 budget for the installation of call boxes and is excited that the project has come to fruition.

"One child who is saved from being abducted, or one woman who is saved from a violent crime at one of our parks or beaches, makes these call boxes worthwhile," said **Commissioner Souto**. "They provide direct communication to a 9-1-1 dispatcher so a signal can be sent with its exact location and an incident can possibly be avoided."

Continuing with his commitment of improving the quality of life for District 10 residents, **Commissioner Souto** began "Saturdays in the Park with the Commissioner" in January 2005. **Souto** visits a different park in his district each Saturday to discuss residents' comments or concerns.

**Commissioner Souto** may be reached at (305) 375-4835 or via email at [District10@miamidade.gov](mailto:District10@miamidade.gov) for details.

## Jose "Pepe" Diaz, District 12



**Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz** is actively promoting Miami-Dade County and its infrastructure as a world class international business center, commonly referred to as the "Gateway to the Americas."

A recent business development on a mission trip to Asia was so successful that the **Tianjin's**

**Economic Development Association (TEDA)** recently visited Miami-Dade to pursue distribution facilities for Chinese goods. Tianjin is China's third largest city and is a major commercial and industrial center, as well as the biggest port and largest free trade zone in north China. **TEDA** is looking into establishing an office at the Miami Free Zone.

In addition, **Commissioner Diaz** recently welcomed small-and medium-sized local businesses and political leaders and executives from several top businesses at the Free Trade with Central America and the Dominican Republic Summit.

**Commissioner Diaz** may be reached at (305) 375-4343 or via email at [District12@miamidade.gov](mailto:District12@miamidade.gov)

## Natacha Seijas, District 13



Commissioners approved a resolution sponsored by **Commissioner Seijas** declaring May as the Month of Commemoration of Cuba and the Cuban-American Experience in Miami-Dade County, setting off a month-long showcase of Cuban culture and tradition in the lobby of County Hall.

Many District 13 residents joined **Commissioner Seijas** on May 2 and helped kick-off the Commemoration by unveiling a month-long exhibit of Cuba's history. A collaboration of the **University of Miami's Cuban Heritage Collection** and the **Institute for Cuban and Cuban American Studies**, the exhibit featured manuscripts, prints and photographs of key moments and figures in Cuba, and video of the Cuban exodus to the United States and the Freedom Tower. Cuban music and an art exhibit featuring works by such artists as Trinidad Pino, and the Scull Sisters were also included.

On May 20, the lobby of County Hall rocked to Latin sounds as hundreds of residents joined **Seijas** and her Commission colleagues at a Cuban Independence Day program. The festivities included performances by award winning musician **Arturo Sandoval**, the **Little Havana Activities & Nutrition Center's** song and dance group, **Las Maraquetas**, students from the **Lincoln-Marti School Dance Troupe**, and the **Hialeah Middle School Jazz Band**. Author and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist **Mirta Ojito** was on-hand to present her book *Finding Mañana*, along with numerous exhibitors who showcased Cuban culture including cigar rolling, arts and crafts. Radio personality **Marta Flores** was Mistress of Ceremony.

"May 20th is commemorated by Cubans all over the world in remembrance of our long struggle to become independent, a struggle which continues to this day," said **Commissioner Seijas**.

**Commissioner Seijas** may be reached at (305) 375-4831.



## Jackson Memorial Hospital helps young girl catch her breath

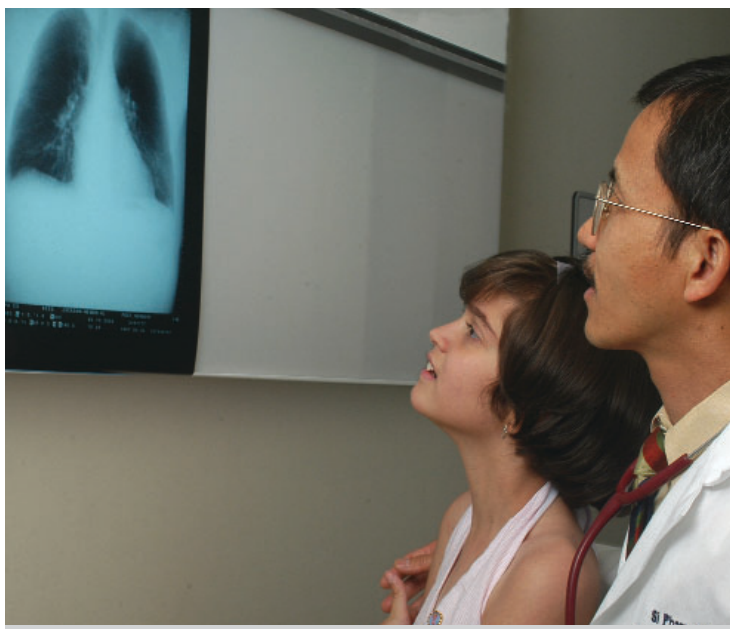
It's easier breathing for 12-year-old, Mariana Gonzalez, who is recovering at **Jackson Memorial Hospital** after receiving the first pediatric double lung transplant in South Florida.

“There are many conditions that lead to end-stage lung disease,” said **Michael J. Light, M.D.**, professor of clinical pediatrics, pulmonary division, department of pediatrics, UM/Jackson. “Mariana was our first pediatric patient, and we expect our transplant program to continue to grow.”

"The success of this procedure is good news for both pediatric and adult lung transplant candidates from South Florida, who will no longer have to travel far from home for an extended period of time, placing a heavy burden on themselves and their families," said **Si M. Pham, M.D.**, professor of surgery and director, heart/lung transplant and artificial heart programs, University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center.

Dr. Pham noted that Jackson has the only Medicare-approved lung transplant program in South and Central Florida, and is one of only 47 U.S. centers that are Medicare-approved for this type of transplant. “This positions Jackson as a center of excellence for transplant candidates from all over Florida and the United States, as well as other parts of the world,” he said.

For Mariana Gonzalez, the life-saving transplant came after a diagnosis of pulmonary fibrosis and chronic respiratory failure. She had been on the lung transplant waiting list since December 11, 2002. In the last six months, she became very sick, requiring oxygen 24 hours a day. She was losing weight and being fed through a tube in her stomach. She was admitted to the hospital several times because of respiratory failure.



***Dr. Pham gives Mariana an opportunity to see her new lungs.***

According to UNOS (United Network for Organ Sharing), a total of 31 pediatric lung transplantations have been performed in Florida, compared to 676 in the United States since 1988. The American Lung Association estimates that approximately 4,000 people across the country are waiting for lung transplants. At **Jackson Memorial Hospital**, more than 40 patients are on the list.

The **University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center** ranks among the top medical centers in the nation for total solid organ transplantation, which includes kidney, liver, heart, pancreas, intestine and multi-organ. The **UM/JMMC** teams perform more than 400 life-saving adult and pediatric transplants every year, including many international patients. The Lung Transplant program at **JMH** began in 1995, and its first transplant patient is still alive today.

Based on the volume of transplant surgeries, Jackson's transplant center is ranked among the 10 the only Florida hospital to perform every kind of information about **JMH** log on to

busiest in the nation, and is the only Florida hospital to perform every kind of organ transplant. For more information about **JMH** log on to **<http://www.um-jmh.org/>**

## Team Metro

**Delivering Excellence Every Day right to your front door**

April is springtime - a time to refresh and renew. It's also Miami-Dade County's Neighborhood P.R.I.D.E. month and Team Metro offices held a variety of beautification events that celebrated our community and neighborhood unity.

The Neighborhood P.R.I.D.E or Promoting Responsibility In Dade's Environment festivities included a clean up and a get-to-know-your-neighbor gathering. See what happened in your neck of the woods.

## Kendall Office

It was a “paint out” for the Devon Aire I Villas Community. **Team Metro-Kendall** pressure cleaned and painted the subdivision wall that abuts Florida’s Turnpike. It’s all about making Miami-Dade County beautiful.

## Tamiami Office

A property in total disarray, which had safety-related concerns, overgrowth and cluttered with items that

could become projectiles during a windy hurricane could have easily made the next episode of an HGTV series, thanks to Team Metro-Tamiami Office. Staff joined members of the Westchester Community Church congregation to clean the lot and make the grounds hurricane ready.

## Melrose Office

Over 500 students participated in an exciting day of games and relays. The fun filled day started off with a dynamic Pep Rally that involved all of the students cheering and showing the pride they have in themselves, their school and their community. All participants received a ribbon that was generously provided by Amerigroup Corporation. Amerigroup along with Frito Lay provided refreshments.

Melrose Elementary School held their fourth annual Melrose P.R.I.D.E. Games - coordinated by Team Metro Melrose, Regis House, Miami Dade Police Department and Melrose Elementary School.

## South Office

Local businesses, schools, organizations and residents united to complete various community improvement projects, including wall paintings and neighborhood clean-ups, community health awareness fairs and a huge, beautification project that will remain an ongoing project.

## West Office

From set-up to clean-up, this year's Neighborhood P.R.I.D.E. Week Grand Finale, "Art in the Park," hosted by Team Metro's West Office in concert with **Chairman Joe A. Martinez**, truly exemplified the spirit of this annual community-wide initiative. Bright blue skies and beautiful breezes heralded the start of a truly memorable day.

To learn more about Neighborhood P.R.I.D.E. Week,  
or to participate in next year's events, please call  
**(305) 638-6800.**

### Garbage collection the Jetson family would appreciate

By Frank Calderon

It's green, it's huge, has a lid and wheels. Look for it at a neighborhood near you soon. If you live north of Bird Road and are served by the Miami-Dade County Department of Solid Waste Management you will soon see these creatures making their way down your streets.

#### What is "it?"

"It" is the new, 96-gallon **EZ Go Waste Cart**. Designed to work with the County's new automated garbage trucks, the **EZ Go Waste Cart** - with built in wheels for easy maneuvering - will help make "garbage day" a little easier for Miami-Dade residents.

**Miami-Dade's Solid Waste Management Department** began distributing the new carts in May to customers who live north of Bird Road (this includes residents of unincorporated Miami-Dade, Aventura, Miami Gardens, Sunny Isles Beach, Miami Lakes and Doral).

More than 140,000 of the new receptacles will go out to customers as part of the Department's first phase of distribution (**Solid Waste** customers who live south of Bird Road will get their **EZ Go Waste Carts** at a later date). **Solid Waste** plans to implement twice-weekly automated garbage collection service - using the **EZ Go Waste Carts** - for all its customers over the course of the next several years.

The new **EZ Go Waste Carts** are specially made to work with **Solid Waste's** new automated garbage trucks. The trucks have a mechanical arm that reaches out and grips the **EZ Go Waste Carts**, emptying it into the truck. This automated service will help keep neighborhoods neater and cleaner, eliminating piles of garbage bags along the curb and preventing animals from scattering the garbage. "We love the service because it is convenient, makes the neighbor-



*One of the Miami-Dade Solid Waste Management's new automated trucks picks up an EZ Go Waste Cart.*

hood look neater on garbage day and we do not have to worry about rodents getting into our garbage anymore," explains Anna Kinchens, of northwest Miami-Dade. The new service is also faster and safer for County employees.

The **EZ Go Waste Carts** feature an attached lid and are available in three sizes: 96-gallon, 64-gallon and 35-gallon. The largest of the **EZ Go Waste Carts** can hold as many as five bags of garbage. The substantial size of this container should allow most residents to make only one trip to the curb. But while the cart is larger than most customers' existing containers, the wheels make the job of moving it to the curbside easy.

**Solid Waste Department** customers will receive two mailers detailing the new service before their new cart is delivered. Instructions on when to begin using the **EZ Go Waste Cart** will be provided with delivery of the cart. **EZ Go Waste Cart** is property of the County and it must remain with the service address, even if the residents move.

Residents can throw out their old trash containers by placing a visible note on the container requesting the Department to dispose of their container along with the garbage, or by taking the empty container to a Neighborhood Trash and Recycling Center. For more information on Automated Collection and other waste services, call (305) 594-1500 or visit <http://www.miamidade.gov/dswm>

NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS • NEWS

### Miami-Dade's Consumer Advocate Answers Your Questions

#### Q: Why is it important to get a credit report and how much does it cost?

**A:** Your credit report has information on where you live, how you pay your bills and whether you've been sued, arrested, or if you've filed for bankruptcy. Nationwide consumer reporting companies sell the information in your report to creditors, insurers, employers and other businesses that use it to evaluate your applications for credit, insurance, employment, or renting a home. These credit reports often contain mistakes that can negatively affect your chance to obtain any of these services. And these errors will remain on your file unless you take action to have them corrected or deleted.

Additionally, it's one of the quickest ways of discovering whether you've been a victim of identity theft, the fastest growing 'white collar crime' in our county. "It is important that consumers know exactly what is being reported to the credit bureaus about them," said **Leonard Elias, Miami-Dade County**

**Consumer Advocate.** "The best way to find out whether you are the victim of an identity theft is to obtain one report from a different bureau every four months, thus enabling you to detect unauthorized activities (identity theft) throughout the year."

Until now, you would have had to spend about \$28 to get a report from each of the major credit reporting bureaus: Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. However, effective June 1, 2005, under the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA), you can now get one free credit report a year from each of these agencies.

To access your free annual credit report, visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com), call (877) 322-8228 or write to: Annual Credit Report Request Service P.O. Box 105281 Atlanta, GA 30348-5281

For a free brochure on ID Theft, call the **Consumer Services Department's Mediation Center** at (305) 375-3677 or visit [www.miamidade.gov/csd/IDtheft.asp](http://www.miamidade.gov/csd/IDtheft.asp)

### Save water...and money



The household shower is the second heaviest user of water (after the toilet) comprising up to 30% of total home water use. Regular showerheads have a flow rate of five to eight gallons per minute - that's 25 to 40 gallons of water used every 5 minutes. Installing a low-flow showerhead is a practical way to reduce water consumption, and cut your water and energy bills!

Join **Commission Chairman Joe A. Martinez**, County employees and residents at the County Fairgrounds on **Saturday, August 13, 2005** for the launch of the **Water and**

**Sewer Department's Showerhead Exchange Program.** Bring your old showerhead and you'll get a new, water-saving model-with built-in massage, on/off button and a swivel head-absolutely **FREE!**

To find out more about the Showerhead Exchange Program, please call (786) 552-8090 or visit us online at [www.miamidade.gov/wasd](http://www.miamidade.gov/wasd)

If you can't make it to the launch don't worry, you can still get your **FREE** showerhead. Just visit one of our four exchange locations:

**Caleb Center Center**  
5400 NW 22 Ave. 1st Floor  
**South Dade Government**  
10710 SW 211 St. 1st Floor  
**LeJeune Office**  
3575 S. LeJeune Road  
**Douglas**  
3071 SW 38 Ave. 1st Floor



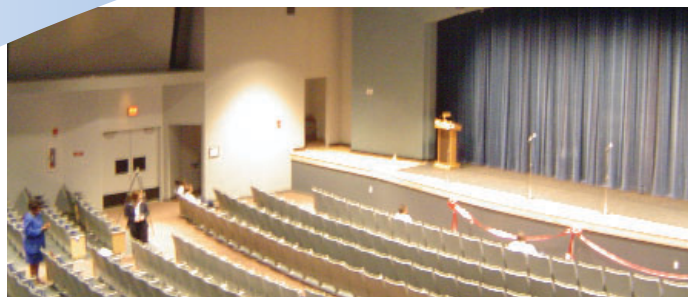
## Being a County resident has its perks

Nestled between the Grove and bustling downtown Miami is **Vizcaya Museum and Gardens** - a beautiful and peaceful oasis. Sitting on ten acres of gardens on Biscayne Bay, the European-inspired estate - which includes a house filled with art and antique furnishings, and a hardwood hammock (native forest) - was built by American industrialist James Deering. Now County residents can tour this treasure on **August 28 and September 25 for FREE!** For more information, visit [www.viscayamuseum.org](http://www.viscayamuseum.org)



## Shakespeare and Vizcaya - a perfect combo!

Florida International University's Theatre Department will present William Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, set in early 20th century Miami, August 11-14. The production will be held in the historic Garage Building of Vizcaya and will mark the opening of the Vizcaya Village as a center for education and cultural activity. For more information, call (305) 250-9133.



## All the world's a stage - at least in Hialeah!

By Marialaura Leslie

Nick bowed as the crowd cheered. To his left and right were friends and drama club pals. This group, long ago bitten by the theater bug, smiled as the audience roared. This was but one of many shining moments to come for these talented actors; and the end of their first, but certainly not last, performance in the newly renovated Hialeah High Auditorium.

Officially opened in April, the redesigned and modernized 838-seat Hialeah High Auditorium features completely renovated public spaces, including a refurbished audience chamber with comfortable blue seats, a new box office, and a larger concession area. The stage has been outfitted with the latest theatrical equipment and the backstage has been expanded and upgraded for performers.

"There is so much talent in this community; this facility will give cultural groups a home in which they can create their art," said **Gary A. Graff, Theatre Arts Director, Hialeah High School**. "I see this auditorium as a means of bringing the community together and of building and expanding the arts in Hialeah High, the City of Hialeah, and Miami-Dade County."

For a fraction of the cost of building a new theater of equivalent size, students now have a first-rate facility in which to pursue their studies and present performances, thanks to an innovative partnership between Miami-Dade County and the Miami-Dade County Public Schools System. "I am extremely pleased to see the final results of this \$3.5 million investment of County funds," said **County Commissioner Natacha Seijas (District 13)**. "Hialeah High School now has a beautiful theater that the entire community can enjoy. Local arts groups and traveling shows will now have a first-class stage in one of the most populous and vibrant neighborhoods in Miami-Dade County."

"Hialeah now has its first significant performing arts center where community cultural groups can stage programs for the enjoyment and benefits of the residents during evenings and weekends," noted **Department of Cultural Affairs Director Michael Spring**.

For more information about this neighborhood cultural facility-located at **251 East 47th Street**, contact **Hialeah High School at (305) 822-1500** or <http://hhs.dadeschools.net>

## Are you ready?

### When It Rains, It Pours!

**Miami-Dade County** is known for its beautiful waterfronts and waterways, but because it is located in a unique geographical area, it is particularly susceptible to flooding in the event of major rain fall or storm surges. Experts have predicted a very busy hurricane season, which might have you thinking about buying or upgrading your flood insurance coverage. To do this, you may need to submit an Elevation Certificate for your home or business. Miami-Dade County's **Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM)** has unveiled a new online tool that allows you to expedite that process so that you can get your certificate quicker and easier.

"DERM is always looking for new ways to bring our services closer to the residents, making access to information easier and more convenient," said **Jerry Crawford, Chief of DERM's Computer Services Division**. One way **DERM** accomplishes this is by continuing to improve their online services with the help of the staff from the County's **Enterprise Technology Services Department (ETSD)**.

Currently, you can see the daily Air Quality Index, which reports how clean or polluted our air is on a particular day, and if there are any associated health concerns; look up artificial reefs by their location, what materials were deployed and at what depth; research all of the permits that **DERM** issues and print the application form you need; you can even determine if you are in a special flood hazard area, also known as a flood zone. "The latest addition to **DERM** services on the web is the capability to search and download elevation certificates which can be found through our home page at [www.miamidade.gov/derm](http://www.miamidade.gov/derm)," said Jerry.

Visit [miamidade.gov/derm](http://miamidade.gov/derm) for more information on how we're making things simpler for you!



**DERM's Computer Services staff members Glenn Johnson and Olga Ubieta work on making sure that the new Elevation Certificate Online Service is operating smoothly.**



## Are you ready?

### Hurricane Preparedness from the Miami-Dade Office of Emergency Management

According to the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center, Hurricane Research Division, and National Hurricane Center**, this Hurricane season promises to be a busy one. Their outlook calls for 12-15 tropical storms, with 7-9 of the tropical storms becoming hurricanes, and 3-5 becoming major hurricanes. Although these are only predictions, and no one knows exactly where a storm will hit-we must all err on the side of caution and prepare.

The best preparation for a hurricane is having a **Disaster Plan**. Plan ahead and protect your family and your home. You don't have to write a book or prepare an elaborate report-just give real thought to some important topics.

Hurricane season has just begun and will last until November 30. Here are some tips to make your preparation easy.

#### Evacuation Plan

Identify two different escape routes out of each room in your home. Make sure everyone, including children, is familiar with these routes. Find out if you live in an evacuation zone. If you do, look at a map and identify two different routes out of your neighborhood. If you do not live in an evacuation zone, you will shelter-in-place. Find the room with the fewest number of windows and doors, probably a bathroom or large closet. This is where you, the members of your household, your pets, and your disaster supplies will ride out the storm.

#### Communication Plan

- Talk with your employer and your children's school or day care facility about their disaster plans.
- Identify two different places for your household to meet in case you are separated during an emergency. One should be right outside of your house, like a tree, and the other should be outside of your immediate neighborhood, such as a store or place of worship.
- Local telephone lines may be down or overwhelmed, so choose a contact that lives out of the area for you to call and report that you are okay. Out of area friends and relatives should also call this person to find out how you are doing.

#### Pruning trees

Reduce hurricane damage by pruning your trees season and installing approved

storm shutters or impact resistant glass. If your only option is to use plywood, visit [www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org) for instructions on proper plywood installation. Do not put masking tape on your windows; this does not offer any protection from flying debris. Bring in patio furniture, toys and any other loose items in your yard well before the storm arrives.

#### Insurance

Review your insurance policies, make sure that you understand them, and that you have sufficient coverage. You should do this now and not wait until the hurricane is threatening-you may not be able to make changes at that time.

#### Special Needs

People with special needs-on dialysis or electricity dependent-may need extra assistance preparing for a storm. If you have special needs, contact the **Office of Emergency Management's Evacuation Assistance Program** at (305) 513-7700 to register for assistance during an evacuation. If you know someone with special needs, don't forget about them during an emergency, they may need your help.

#### Disaster Supply Kit

Prepare your disaster supply kit now-it will make your life much easier should an emergency present itself. Gather enough supplies to last 3 to 14 days. Keep your supplies in a backpack, duffel bag, or other easy-to-carry storage device.

#### Essential Information

During a threat of a hurricane, stay tuned to Miami-Dade TV or [www.miamidade.gov](http://www.miamidade.gov) for important storm-related information.



**An ounce of prevention is a pound of cure - PREPARE YOURSELVES!**



Chief Castillo briefs officials on hurricane news.

### An Interview with Chief Carlos Castillo, Director of the Office of Emergency Management

#### Q: "When are evacuation orders decided and who decides?"

**A: Chief Castillo:** Deciding when and if to evacuate is undoubtedly the single most difficult decision for an emergency manager. In Miami-Dade County, the decision to evacuate is typically based on the recommendation of the Director of Emergency Management. The recommendation is made to the County Manager and to the County Mayor, as called for in the County Code. The Mayor makes the decision, which is then shared with the community.

Miami-Dade County has three evacuation zones. In the event a complete evacuation is called for, more than 400,000 people are asked to evacuate further inland in anticipation of the storm surge. Studies have shown that it would take 36 hours to evacuate this many people. Unfortunately, with 36 hours prior to the expected arrival of tropical storm-force winds, there is still time for the hurricane to change course and not affect Miami-Dade directly. Naturally, it is more prudent to err on the side of caution.

#### Q: "How does the County prepare?"

**A:** The **Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management (OEM)** is responsible for mitigating, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters which threaten the lives, safety, or property of the citizens of Miami-Dade County. Working with local, state, and federal agencies, **OEM** strives to: (1) Develop citizen self-sufficiency through public education, (2) Develop and maintain multi-hazard emergency management plans, (3) Provide an effective and efficient forum for municipal, county, state, federal, and private resources to respond to disasters by offering facilities, equipment, coordination, administrative, and technical support, and (4) Create an atmosphere of interagency cooperation in emergency and disaster operations.

For more information about preparing a Disaster Plan, contact the **Miami-Dade Office of Emergency Management** at (305) 468-5400 or [www.miamidade.gov/oem](http://www.miamidade.gov/oem) Remember that a little work now can save you a great deal of trouble in the future.





*The Port of Miami proudly boasts the title, "Cruise Capital of the World and the Cargo Gateway of the Americas!"*

## The Port of Miami - an economic powerhouse to Miami-Dade County

By Lynn Norman-Teck

This is a seaport town. And the **Port of Miami**, with an annual economic impact of \$12 billion that contributes 98,000 jobs that are directly or indirectly related to port activities, is a vital part of Miami-Dade County's economy.

Major investments in capital infrastructure and improvements have helped the **Port of Miami** remain at the top in the highly competitive world of international trade. In fact, in order to maintain its rank as a world-class seaport, and accommodate ever-growing demands, more than \$250 million in capital enhancements are under way.

### Growth by Leaps and Bounds

Approximately 3.5 million cruise passengers transited through the **Port of Miami** and 719 cruise ships docked at the Port last year. Last fall, construction was completed to expand wharf capacity and accommodate larger ships. Significant changes have been made to improve the **Port's** cargo-handling ability including the addition of 1,145 feet of wharf land improvements and a mobile gantry crane rail for future cargo movements.

"Despite the threat of hurricanes, increased security regulations, and a national truckers' work stoppage, the **Port of Miami** continued to successfully meet its business challenges in 2004," says **Charles Towsley, Port of Miami Director**. In January, construction began on two new Passenger Terminals (D and E) that will accommodate 3,500 to 4,000 mega-cruise ships and will feature new hi-tech security screening facility for embarkation, an automated baggage handling system and a combined Customs and Border Protection Facility - the first of its kind in the country.

### Leading Destination

Often called the Cargo Gateway of the Americas, the **Port of Miami** is not only a dominant force in the U.S. trade with Central and South America, but also serves as a destination for cargo from the Caribbean Basin, Europe, Asia and Africa.

"**The Port of Miami** is the ocean bridge between us and our major trading partners," explains **Manny Gonzalez, Director of the County's International Trade Consortium**.

### Deep Waters

To accommodate larger ships, the Government Cut waterway which leads to the **Port of Miami** from Biscayne Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, have been dredged and will continue to be improved through a multi-year, \$170 million project.

### A Brave New World

Beyond improving its facilities and services, management at the **Port of Miami** has the crucial responsibility of protecting against possible security threats. A series of security infrastructure improvements have recently also been made.

### A Great 2004, an Exciting 2005

"One of our primary goals is to promote growth in both our cruise and cargo industries in Miami-Dade County through infrastructure enhancements and capacity improvements in conjunction with aggressive foreign and domestic marketing programs," says **Towsley**. A new website - **[www.miamidade.gov/portofmiami](http://www.miamidade.gov/portofmiami)** - was recently unveiled to better serve prospective and current clients, port users, tourists and county residents; and to maintain its competitive advantage as the "Gateway of the Americas." As the Port continues to evolve and expand in order to remain competitive, its success and vitality is ensuring that all of our community will grow and prosper.



### Plan your next vacation at Greynolds Park-there's something for everyone

If you don't have the money - or stamina - for an extended summer vacation, but are anxious to take the kids on an adventure, **Greynolds Park** is the ticket! From the moment you drive into the park, you enter a lush green habitat that feels miles away from urban Miami. The Park reflects the Miami of old-when the Tequesta Indians traveled the Oleta River and seagrape trees and mangroves ruled the river's shore. A quiet gem tucked away in North Miami, **Greynolds Park** is a 265-acre oasis with winding trails and plenty of opportunity to watch nature's furry and feathered creatures in their natural habitat.

#### Nature Trail

Start with a stroll on the Oleta River Nature Trail - a scenic path through the park's magnificent mangrove wetland. Home to dozens of indigenous birds, including great blue herons, ibis, osprey, red-shoulder hawks and owls, the trail is perfect for veteran bird watchers as well as those of us only familiar with sparrows and pigeons. **Alison Brennan** and her sons are big fans of the trails at Greynolds. "Kirby, 6, and Max, 4, love kayaking and exploring the park," said **Alison**. "It's a great place for kids to experience the great outdoors right in their own backyard."

#### Climb a Fort

In 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps began building Greynolds Park. The Corps - created by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to fight soil erosion and declining timber resources, put unemployed young men to work and renew the nation's damaged forests by planting an estimated three billion trees from 1933 to 1942. Their work can still be seen at **Greynolds Park**. They built the coral rock turret and mound, and boathouse. The coral rock structure that resembles a fort is per-

fect for young adventurers who must climb the winding and bumpy steps to reach the lookout point. The grass mound makes for a thrilling roll down the hill for those young and plucky enough to take the plunge. When the park first opened, this was the highest land point in the County. The beautiful coral rock boathouse is where you can rent paddleboats and rowboats. Overlooking the serene river, this is a lovely spot for a picnic or wildlife watching.

#### 9-holes

Surrounded by magnificent trees, the **Greynolds Golf Course** is a spectacularly pretty and challenging nine-hole, par 3 course. The course offers electric carts, reasonable green fees, club rentals, and a spacious clubhouse.

#### Playground and Picnic Areas

There are two picnic shelters located next to the Tot Lot playground area. Complete with the usual kid fare-slide and swings, the area is perfect for a youngster's birthday party. Bounce houses are permitted. If you prefer a quieter spot, the Park has other picnic shelters available for rent; and there are plenty of picnic tables scattered throughout the park for an impromptu family picnic or romantic lunch for two-no reservations necessary.

#### Camp under the stars, or in a rustic cabin

Set on the banks of the Oleta River where herons, ibis and egrets can be spied among the majestic mangroves, woodsy **Camp Greynolds** is ideal for overnight retreats into the wilderness. The parks' woods are lined with miles of hiking trails that lead to grand oaks, tropical plants, wild flowers, colorful butterflies, a bird rookery and a host of creatures including owls, bats, raccoons and gray foxes. This charming spot has room for plenty of tents and is



View of the Oleta River's edge from the second floor of the boathouse.

home to eight lovely cabins with four bunk beds each-available for rent. There's also a mess hall/kitchen on the grounds-perfect for meetings and even weddings.

**Greynolds Park** is truly a sanctuary for the soul and feast for the eyes. Whether you're a seasoned camper, nature buff or just looking for a day away from city life, this is the place for you.

#### Greynolds Park

17530 West Dixie Highway  
North Miami  
(305) 945-3425 • Open daily 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Cost: \$4 per car

For shelter and cabin rentals or for more information, visit [www.miamidade.com/parks](http://www.miamidade.com/parks)

## News with a difference

### Down To Earth

By Carol Higgins

South Florida is like nowhere else in the world-particularly when it comes to our unique subtropical environment. Miami-Dade TV's Telly-Award winning series, "**Down To Earth**" gives viewers a close-up look at environmental issues that come close to home-from recycling to yard care to flooding.

This summer's episode, "**Keeping the Waters at Bay**," focuses on the 600 miles of canals that wind through our County. These canals do much more than provide scenic waterfront views. They are working parts of our water management system, redirecting water and reducing the risk of flooding. Host Isabel de Quesada examines how the County is working to improve this vital flood control infrastructure, without which it would be nearly impossible to live and work in rain-soaked South Florida.

"**Down To Earth**" and the Spanish version "**Entre en Ambiente**" air daily on Miami-Dade TV. The complete program schedule is available online at [www.miamidade.gov/TV](http://www.miamidade.gov/TV)

From gavel-to-gavel coverage of meetings of the Board of County Commissioners to locally-produced news, informational and cultural programming, Miami-Dade TV is your best choice for County government information. Check with your cable provider for the channel number in your area.





# NEWS ON THE GO

## • TRANSIT Busway Right-of-Way

Rush hour on US 1 is often bumper-to-bumper. But now, thanks to the opening the five-mile segment of the South Miami-Dade Busway, traffic should flow more easily. The South Miami-Dade busway extends from Southwest 200th Street to Southwest 264th Street. For more information log on to [www.miamidade.gov/transit/](http://www.miamidade.gov/transit/)

## Transportation Information

Want to make sure your flight is on time? Need a live update on traffic conditions on I-95? Interested in saving gas by taking public transportation, but don't know how to use the bus? Now you can access all the transportation information you need from a single easy-to-use website. [Go.miamidade.gov](http://Go.miamidade.gov) is the new gateway to all transportation services and information in Miami-Dade County. Find out about air, land, sea and accessible services by logging on to [go.miamidade.gov](http://go.miamidade.gov)

## Incentive to Senior Travelers: The Golden Passport Discount Booklet

Transit kicked-off its latest rider promotion for senior travelers: the **Golden Passport Discount Booklet**, a senior discount program designed for Golden Passport cardholders. The pocket-sized Discount Booklet features reusable coupons for more than 40 local retail stores, salons, health centers, entertainment venues and restaurants. The discounts range from five to 50 percent, including a \$1,000 savings toward closing costs from a local mortgage company. Current Golden Passport cardholders can pick up their Discount Booklet at any Team Metro office or Transit Service Center throughout the County. The Golden Passport allows Miami-Dade County residents who are 65 years of age and older and Social Security beneficiaries to ride transit free. For more information about this program or to obtain a Golden Passport, call (305) 654-6545.

## • OFFICE OF STRATEGIC BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

### Residents Increasingly Satisfied with County Services and Performance

This past March, a Florida International University Metropolitan Center poll revealed that our residents are increasingly happier with Miami-Dade County government. 62.2% of voters believe the County is headed in the right direction as compared to a May 2002 poll with only 39.7% of our residents confident in the County's direction. The Metropolitan Center uses poll results to deliver information and expertise to decision makers, community leaders and citizens. To view results of the survey, visit: <http://metropolitan.fiu.edu/downloads/countydirect.pdf>

## • METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION Annual Newsletter Available on the Web

The **Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**, the agency responsible for the transportation planning process in Miami-Dade County, has posted its annual newsletter entitled "Transportation for a New Century" on the web at [www.miamidade.gov/mpo](http://www.miamidade.gov/mpo) The newsletter, in English, Spanish and Creole, contains future transportation improvements plans along with use lanes, waterborne transportation, safe routes to school, the Metrorail-Coconut Grove Connection, buses using the expressway shoulders, and bus rapid transit opportunities. For more information, call the MPO office at (305) 375-4507 or visit [www.miamidade.gov/mpo](http://www.miamidade.gov/mpo)

## • INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE Millions in Savings and Numerous Arrests Highlighted

The **Office of the Inspector General (OIG)** released its 2004 Annual Report, highlighting many accomplishments resulting in the savings of millions of taxpayer's dollars. The report details many investigations, including those that uncovered a scheme to steal over \$4 million dollars in jet fuel from Miami International Airport and billing irregularities at the Public Health Trust /Jackson Memorial Hospital (JMH) which resulted in \$945,000 in recoveries for JMH. **OIG** investigations also resulted in 36 arrests of County employees and others for a variety of crimes including official misconduct, theft, racketeering and perjury. To report abuse, fraud, misconduct or corruption, call (305) 375-1946, or (305) 579-2593. Visit [www.miamidadeig.org](http://www.miamidadeig.org) to view the Annual Report.

## • OFFICE OF STRATEGIC BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

### Miami-Dade County Wins Two Prestigious Awards Again

Miami-Dade County won two awards from the **Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)**. The County received a **Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**, for the 24th year in a row, for its fiscal year 2002-2003 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, and the **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award** for this fiscal year. This is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting and represents a significant achievement, reflecting (the County's) commitment to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting. The **GFOA** presented a Certificate of Recognition for Budget Presentation to **County Manager George Burgess** as the person ultimately responsible for the County having achieved the **Distinguished Budget Presentation Award**; and **Rachel Baum, Finance Director**, received an **Award of Financial Reporting Achievement** for being responsible for the County's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. For more information about the Finance Department, visit [miamidade.gov/finance](http://miamidade.gov/finance)

## • AIRPORT Affordable Rates for Miami International Airport Travelers

"Why drive north for an affordable fare?" That's the question **Miami International Airport (MIA)** is posing in its new marketing campaign, which began May 1. The answer: "You don't have to anymore, because low fares have landed at MIA." The campaign will inform travelers of the many reasons why they should say, "I Fly MIA!" the theme of the ads. To remain competitive, many airlines at MIA now offer specialty fares and simplified fare plans which do away with certain restrictions that would normally increase the price of a ticket. To find out more visit, [www.miami-airport.com](http://www.miami-airport.com)

## Live on 1610 AM

**MIA** has a new informational radio station that broadcasts 24 hours a day. Unofficially dubbed **WMIA, 1610 AM** can be heard within a two-mile radius of MIA – providing essential information about airport roadway traffic conditions, parking, airline locations and precautions for drivers in the vicinity of the airport. Bright blue signs posted along State Roads 836, 826, and 112 will direct travelers to the radio station's location on the AM dial.

## • DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES On the Air and TV

Tune in to the **Department of Human Services (DHS)** radio and television shows and learn all about the services provided by DHS. "The Human Side" radio show airs every fourth Monday and Tuesday of every month from 2 pm - 3 pm on WMBM 1490 AM. "The Human Side" television series airs Mondays and Wednesdays at 10 am and 6 pm on Miami-Dade TV. Miami-Dade County viewers who have basic cable (not satellite) can watch Miami-Dade Cable-TAP. For more information about "The Human Side" and all of DHS' services, log on to [www.miamidade.gov/dhs/](http://www.miamidade.gov/dhs/)



Carlos Alvarez  
Mayor

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